

Kansas To Receive Flu Vaccine From Universities

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) will purchase 1,830 doses of flu vaccine from six universities in Kansas and redistribute the vaccine to local health departments for individuals at high risk for severe complications from the flu.

The vaccine was made available to KDHE after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) requested that universities and colleges work with health departments to redistribute flu shots to priority groups. The following universities agreed to sell a portion of their current flu vaccine supplies to KDHE for redistribution to areas of need:

- Emporia State University
- Kansas State University
- Pittsburg State University
- University of Kansas
- Washburn University
- Wichita State University

“We are so pleased that these university officials in Kansas were willing to offer up some of the flu vaccine they ordered to ensure that those people in high risk categories have better access to the vaccine this year,” said Sue Bowden, KDHE Immunizations Program Director. “This generous action from the universities is greatly appreciated and will help ensure more high risk Kansans are better protected from influenza this year.”

KDHE Redistribution Plan

The 1,830 doses flu vaccine from the universities will be distributed according to KDHE’s newly developed flu vaccine redistribution plan.

This plan provides a guideline for vaccine redistribution that helps individuals at highest risk of developing severe complications from the flu receive the vaccine first. The first priority is to make sure that every county has had enough vaccine shipped to them to cover 20 percent of the estimated high-risk population. **Our current estimates are that about 24,000 doses of vaccine would need to go to the following 32 health departments to get every county to the level of 20 percent coverage of the high-risk population:**

Anderson, Butler, Chase, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Cloud, Cowley, Decatur, Greenwood, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Kingman, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Mitchell, Montgomery, Morton, Norton, Osage, Osborne, Pottawatomie, Reno, Rice, Riley, Rush, Stafford, Sumner, Wallace, Wabaunsee, Woodson.

This first step is to ensure that there is a minimal level of vaccine coverage in every county and that no county would go completely without vaccine.

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If there are remaining doses to redistribute after that, vaccine would be allocated and shipped to local health departments using a formula based on an estimate of the county population still at need as a proportion of the total state population at need.

Population at need was derived from the estimates of the total at-risk population in each county. From that is subtracted out the total doses of vaccine shipped to each county, by county.

KDHE Provider Survey:

KDHE is requesting that doctors and other health care providers continue to provide updated information regarding flu vaccine supplies and needs by filling out the survey on the agency's Web site at: www.kdhe.state.ks.us. This information will allow the department to better match the vaccine with the areas of greatest need.

Members of the public considered high risk should call their county health department to obtain information about where and when they may receive a flu shot in their community.

Additional FluMist[®] vaccine is being made available to vaccinate healthy healthcare workers with direct patient care. FluMist[®] is only approved for use in healthy non-pregnant individuals five to 49 years of age. There is a limited supply of FluMist[®] available this year which necessitates that health care providers also vaccinate on a priority basis those individuals who are the household contacts of, or provide care for, persons at the greatest risk of complication from the flu.

Due to the vaccine shortage, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided guidelines for health care providers to follow regarding vaccination of high-risk individuals only. High-risk individuals are as follows:

- People 65 years of age and older
- Children ages 6 months to 23 months
- Adults and children 2 years of age and older with chronic lung or heart disorders including heart disease and asthma
- Pregnant women
- Adults and children 2 years of age and older with chronic metabolic diseases (including diabetes), kidney diseases, blood disorders (such as sickle cell anemia), or weakened immune systems, including persons with HIV/AIDS
- Children and teenagers, 6 months to 18 years of age, who take aspirin daily
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities
- Household members and out-of-home caregivers of infants under the age of 6 months (Children under the age of 6 months cannot be vaccinated.)
- Healthcare workers who provide direct, hands-on patient care with regular frequency to the priority group patients listed above

Other vaccination recommendations:

Healthy persons who are 5-49 and not pregnant, including healthcare workers (except those who care for severely immuno-compromised patients in special care units) and persons caring for children under 6 months should be encouraged to be vaccinated with, intranasally administered live, attenuated influenza vaccine (FluMist).

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Vaccination of Persons in Non-Priority Groups:

Persons who are not included in one of the priority groups above should forego or defer vaccination.

Steps the public can take to avoid catching or spreading the flu:

- Proper hand washing with soap and warm water is extremely important.
- Stay home from school or work when sick.
- Cover the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

For more information regarding flu vaccine and steps you can take to protect yourself from the flu please go to: www.kdhe.state.ks.us.